manifestations of various religions as reflected in their fairs/festivals etc. are given due coverage on Doordarshan.

Registration of newspapers and periodicals

1055. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Registrar of newspapers of India receive every year over 15000 applications for starting new periodicals and newspapers;

(b) if so, whether half of them are being rejected;

(c) if so, what are the main reasons for their rejection; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that 1.55 lakh titles are unduly blocked by people who are not interested in publishing newspapers under those names if so, the steps being taken by Government to put an end to this programme?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. On an average about 15,000 applications for title clearance are received by RNI every year and in about half of the cases titles requested are not found to be available for allotment.

(c) The titles are not cleared in all the cases as the same or similar title stands allotted in favour of others in the same language or in the same State. In some cases, RNI is not able to entertain the applications not submitted in accordance with the prescribed procedure.

(d) Yes, Sir. Over 1.5 lakh titles are blocked. It is proposed to amend the PRB Act, 1867 suitably.

Encouragement to small, medium and vernacular newspapers

1056. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating measures to encourage small, medium and vernacular newspapers;

(b) if so, whether any comprehensive scheme has been prepared in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and how many small newspapers are likely to be benefited by this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT): (a) to (c) The Government is committed to the development and growth of small, medium and language newspapers in the country. In pursuance thereof, an 18 member Expert Committee, which includes representtaives of 5 press organisations, has been constituted to look into their problems and make available its recommendations to the Government. The vernacular newspapers fall mostly in the category of small and medium newspapers.

Revival of the master plan for 8 cities in Madhya Pradesh

1057. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Government of Madhya Pradesh has been asked by the Central Government to revive the master plans for 8 cities;

(b) if so, whether the State Government have also decided to make available maximum amount to development authorities and other development agencies under the Urban Land and Regulation Act; and

(c) if so, what are the 8 cities in Madhya Pradesh for which the master plan have been reviewed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.